

HONORING THE HEROES OF THE  
FORT KENT FIRE**HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD**

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 27, 2012*

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the people of Fort Kent, and the surrounding communities, who responded so admirably to the massive fire in downtown Fort Kent.

In the early morning of March 25, 2012, a massive fire erupted in Fort Kent, Maine destroying several downtown buildings and damaging local businesses. Although these buildings contained numerous apartments, there was mercifully no loss of life. That is because of the heroic efforts of eight local fire departments, the Fort Kent Police, and a town employee who first spotted the flames.

Tenants living on the second floor of the Nadeau's House of Furniture building were evacuated with only minutes to spare as the fire quickly spread. The heat was strong enough to damage businesses located across the street and melt nearby street signs. Moreover, it took thousands of gallons of water, pumped from the St. John River, to finally quell the flames.

The heroism of the Fort Kent Volunteer Fire Department and fire crews from St. Agatha, Frenchville, Madawaska, North Lakes, Eagle Lake, St. Francois, New Brunswick and Clair, New Brunswick cannot be overstated. Neither can the bravery of Matt Bard who first alerted authorities, Tony Enerva and Richard Martin of the Fort Kent Police Department who were among the first on the scene, the Fort Kent Ambulance Service, or the scores of others who helped avert an even greater tragedy.

I am grateful to the Pine Tree Chapter of the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army for providing such immediate relief to the displaced families. I am also extremely heartened by the outpouring of support that has come from the Fort Kent community. Local business leaders have already launched a fundraising campaign to further assist those who lost their belongings in the fire. I know that their combined strength will bring the town through this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring all the heroes who responded to the Fort Kent fire.

RECOGNIZING BENJAMIN C. PABLO  
ON BEING NAMED THE U.S.  
SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S  
VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS  
CHAMPION OF THE YEAR  
FOR 2012**HON. MADELINE Z. BORDALLO**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 27, 2012*

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Benjamin C. Pablo for receiving the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2012 Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year Award. Ben is a United States Army veteran who served for 22 years, and is currently the Vice President and Community Development Officer at the Bank of Guam, where

he is fondly referred to as its "veteran ambassador."

Ben has worked to create educational opportunities for veterans and servicemembers interested in simplifying their finances or opening up a small business. Most notably, in 2010, he helped establish the Guam Veterans Business Outreach Center, which provides resources and training workshops to veterans. Through the outreach center, Ben consults with local veterans on credit and lending criteria and also shares his expertise in creating and developing a successful business plan. Further, Ben helped secure the Bank of Guam's ability to administer SBA Patriot Express Loans to assist veteran clients and members of the military community in creating or expanding their small business.

Additionally, Ben devotes his time to participating in community service activities and civic organizations. He played an instrumental role in helping the Vietnam Veterans of Guam Chapter 668 in obtaining donations from the bank and other organizations to construct the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walls, to memorialize the servicemembers from Guam killed during the Vietnam War. He also serves as the treasurer for Catholic Social Services (CSS) on Guam, and has been a board member for seven years. CSS is a nonprofit organization that provides numerous services to Guam's most vulnerable residents, including many veterans.

I commend Mr. Benjamin C. Pablo for working to improve veterans' business opportunities on Guam and for being SBA's Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year for 2012. I join our island in thanking him for his service to our country, and for his dedication to sharing his financial expertise with our veteran community on Guam.

RECOGNITION FOR THE PUBLIC  
SERVICE OF WILLIAM F. BUNTING**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 27, 2012*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable individual, admired for his public service and expert contributions to meteorology and weather forecasting, Mr. William F. Bunting.

Mr. Bunting is an esteemed veteran of his field. His more than 25 years of experience has taken him across this land—from New York City to Lansing, MI to Norman, OK, to Kansas City, MO, and for the last decade to Fort Worth, TX. He has painstakingly forecast and monitored a number of major weather events during his time in the weather service, including the chain of 59 tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas in 1990, the Kansas City flash flood in the fall of 1998, and the urban tornado in downtown Fort Worth in 2000. Mr. Bunting's judgment and decision-making in weather forecasting and storm damage assessment has been of tremendous value in service to the public.

Mr. Bunting has made significant contributions to research and public understanding of severe storms. He has assembled an extensive website of data to upper air soundings, surface analyses, and weather prediction satellite imagery. He has authored many papers

on severe storms and climatic weather, lectured at more than a dozen weather warning workshops and conducted more than 500 presentations to spotter and emergency management groups, civic organizations, businesses and schools. There is no question that Bill Bunting has invested his knowledge and concerns to enhance the safety of hundreds of thousands of people.

As Meteorologist in Charge at the National Weather Service's forecast office in Fort Worth, Mr. Bunting has supervised a staff of more than 25 forecasters, technicians and support personnel and been responsible for all forecasts, weather advisories, watches and warnings for 46 North Texas counties. Now, after 10 years in Fort Worth, Mr. Bunting is called to serve as Operations Branch Chief at the Storm Prediction Center in Oklahoma beginning in early April. We wish him well in this new position.

It is my great privilege to recognize Mr. Bill Bunting, Meteorologist-in-Charge at the National Weather Service, for his commitment to people's safety, his dedication to the study and understanding of meteorology and for his service to the many citizens whose lives have been saved by being forewarned by his forecasts.

## HONORING MS. PHILLIS OETERS

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 27, 2012*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Ms. Phillis Oeters, an outstanding individual who has continuously supported the South Florida community.

Ms. Oeters currently serves as the Corporate Vice President of Government and Community Relations for Baptist Health South Florida, the largest not-for-profit healthcare organization in the region. As Corporate Vice President, Ms. Oeters is responsible for strategic planning of government and community relations, developing a state and federal legislative agenda consisting of health-care funding, insurance regulation, and general health policy development.

Additionally, Ms. Oeters serves on many community boards including the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, where she will assume the position of Chairman in June 2012. She also serves on the boards of Beacon Council, United Way, Nat Moore Foundation, Orange Bowl, among many others. From 2003 to 2008, she was Chairman of the Board of the Neurologically Injured Compensation Fund for the State of Florida, a billion dollar fund responsible for caring for children injured at birth. Ms. Oeters is a founding member and former Chairman of the President's Council of 100 for Florida International University.

Ms. Oeters has been a long-time supporter of the American Red Cross and was Chairman of the Board for Greater Miami and the Keys Chapter for three years. Amongst her countless duties she has chaired the Spectrum Awards for Women since 1997. She was recently recognized for her community service by receiving "The Champion of Fundraising Award" and "Building our Community Humanitarian of the Year Award" from the March of